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Some Terms Used in This Book

(Added by the Publisher *to the 1989 printing.)*

Sensible, Sensitive—of the senses. These terms are used in reference either to the senses proper (external or internal, including the imagination) or to those movements of the appetites known as passions or emotions.

JUSTICE—1. the state of (Sanctifying) Grace. 2. the moral virtue by which one gives what is due to God, oneself and one's neighbor. (It is in the first sense that the term is usually used in the theology of the spiritual life.)

Justification, Sanctification—entering the state of grace. Sanctification also refers to the *increase of* Sanctifying Grace in the soul.

SUPERNATURAL—divine; pertaining to God or to Sanctifying Grace, which is divine life in the soul. Sanctifying Grace is described as "living water" in the Scriptures. By Sanctifying Grace the three Divine Persons dwell in the soul. The following accompany Sanctifying Grace and are likewise supernatural: the three Theological Virtues—Faith, Hope and Charity; the four infused moral virtues: prudence, justice, temperance, fortitude (these four virtues can also exist on the *natural* level); the seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost. All these supernatural gifts except Faith and Hope are lost by mortal sin; they are all regained through sacramental absolution.

The JUST—a person in the state of Sanctifying Grace.

The Sinner—a person in the state of mortal sin.

Charity—1) the supernatural virtue by which one loves God for His own sake and one's neighbor as oneself for the love of God; this virtue is infused into the soul in Baptism and also in absolution after sacramental confession of mortal sin. Charity is the highest virtue; it vivifies, "informs," or "forms the soul of" every other supernatural virtue. 2) acts of love of God or neighbor as defined above. A person in the state of mortal sin cannot exercise the virtue of Charity because he has lost Charity along with Sanctifying Grace. He can only perform acts of natural love of God and neighbor; these are not meritorious for salvation and heavenly reward, though God in His mercy may look upon them as a plea for the gifts of true repentance and return to Sanctifying Grace.

Faith—the supernatural virtue by which one believes, on the word of God, all the truths He has revealed. This virtue is infused into the soul along with Sanctifying Grace. A person in the state of grace has *living* faith, because his faith is "informed" by Charity; a person in the state of mortal sin may still have faith, but it will be only *dead* faith.

HOPE—the supernatural virtue by which one trusts in God's promises to give him eternal life and the means to obtain it. This virtue is infused into the soul along with Sanctifying Grace.

SANCTITY—the possessing of a high degree of Sanctifying Grace, and living by the supernatural virtues, especially Faith, Hope and, above all, Charity.

Mystical—pertaining to the higher levels of sanctity, in which the soul's supernatural acts are carried out in a divine mode, in intimate dependence upon the seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost. Christians who have not attained to this degree of sanctity perform their supernatural actions in a more human mode; in them the seven Gifts are relatively dormant. Mystical prayer is called contemplation. Phenomena such as visions and revelations, though often found in mystics, are not of the essence of the mystical life.

Contemplation—the higher of the two forms of mental prayer (the lower being meditation). Contemplation is an infused loving knowledge of God. In contemplation, reasoning and discourse are left behind and the mind and will are fixed on God in a wordless act of love, resulting in close union with Him. Contemplation is also called mystical or infused prayer. It is a special gift of God and cannot be acquired by one's own efforts, even aided by actual grace. Nevertheless, one can and should prepare for this gift by humble and persevering efforts at meditation and by the practice of the virtues.

Meditation—the lower of the two forms of mental prayer. In meditation one employs his intellect and will in reflections, affections and holy resolutions.

Gifts of the Holy Ghost. The Seven—Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, Counsel, Piety, Fortitude, Fear (of the Lord). These Gifts are infused dispositions which make a man promptly docile to divine inspirations. They have traditionally been compared to the sails of a ship, enabling the ship to be moved by the wind—which represents the inspirations of the Holy Ghost.

Charisms, or Graces *Gratis Datae* ("Freely Given")—extraordinary spiritual gifts of God such as the gifts of miracles, prophecy and tongues. These are gifts given chiefly for the good of souls other than the recipient; graces *gratis datae* are greatly inferior to Sanctifying Grace and the virtue of Charity. The seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost are not graces *gratis datae*, rather, they are in the normal way of sanctity.

Actual Grace—a supernatural help of God which enlightens the mind and strengthens the will to do good and to avoid evil. Actual grace is a transient gift; it does not remain in the soul.

FR. GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, O.P.

Fr. Reginald Marie Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. (1877-1964) was one of the great Catholic theologians of the 20th century and during his life was undoubtedly the greatest living Dominican theologian. (He is not to be confused with his uncle, Père Lagrange, the biblical scholar.) Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange initially attracted attention in the early 20th century, when he wrote against Modernism. Recognizing that Modernism—which denied the objective truth of divine revelation and affirmed an heretical conception of the evolution of dogma—struck at the very root of Catholic faith, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange wrote classic works on apologetics, defending the Catholic Faith by way of both philosophy and theology. He also taught at the Angelicum in Rome from 1909 to 1960, and he served for many years as a consultor to the Holy Office and other Roman Congregations. He is most famous, however, for his writings.

A thoroughgoing Thomist in the classic Dominican tradition, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange had both a deep appreciation for the enduring vitality of St. Thomas Aquinas' work and a real understanding of the intellectual and spiritual needs of his own time. Having steeped himself in Thomistic principles, he thought through virtually every aspect of the Faith in the light of these principles, producing over 500 books and articles, which give a true theological view of the doctrines of the Faith, bringing out their central elements, placing each element in its proper perspective and relating all the elements to each other. He thus sheds a beautiful, clear light on the truths of the Faith and gives a very firm foundation for understanding them truly. The Catholic Faith thereby stands out in all its splendor—a divine work of incomparable beauty, integrity and structure, ordered to raise man to the divine life of grace and bring to flower in him the "supernatural organism" of Sanctifying Grace and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost—the wellsprings of all true mysticism.

Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange was best known for his spiritual theology, particularly for insisting on the universal call to holiness and for zealously propounding the thesis that infused contemplation—and rhe resulting union with God—are in the *normal* way of holiness or Christian perfection. Thus, Fr. (iattigou l agrange raises the sights of the soul to the true greatness planned for it by God. His classic work tn this field and his overall masterpiece -is *l* li. *l* Im. *Ages of tin·* Interior |j/e Among his other laiuoiis theologit al works are Die J liter VWtys *of the*

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(Continued from outside back cover.)

transforming union, the role of spiritual childhood and of True Devotion to Mary, the charisms (visions, ecstasies, stigmatization, etc.), private revelations, true mystical phenomena vs. false or diabolical phenomena, and a host of other topics.

Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange explains precisely in what sanctity consists and clearly expounds and defends the ancient Christian tradition that all *Christians are called to holiness.* The title of this work refers to the classic division of the spiritual life into three successive stages: the Purgative Way, the Illuminative Way, and the Unitive Way. Showing that the faithful Christian's life of ascetical practices is meant to flower into the mystical life, he clearly distinguishes between, on the one hand, those graces of the mystical life that are in themselves extraordinary (such as visions and ecstasies), and on the other hand, that grace which is often *considered* extraordinary (because not common among souls) but which is in fact in the normal way of sanctity, namely, infused contemplation. In particular, he propounds the thesis that infused contemplation of the mysteries of Faith—and the resulting union with God—are *in the normal way of sanctity and are also morally necessary for holiness.* Infused contemplation is thus clearly presented, not as a peripheral phenomenon in the spiritual life, nor as something reserved for those in the cloister, but rather as a gift which any Christian may well desire and beseech of God, since it is the usual way of reaching eminent sanctity.

The Three Ages of the Interior Life is a great classic which explains in effect the entire Catholic tradition on the spiritual life. It is a work for all who really want to know what the interior life is actually about, and for all who want to gain a true understanding of the great holiness to which Almighty God is at all times calling souls.

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The Love of God *and the Cross of Jesus, The Mother of the Saviour and our Interior Life,* and *Christ the Savior.* His most important philosophical work was *God, His Existence and Nature: A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies.*

The theological works of Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange are unlikely to be equalled for many decades to come, and they cannot be ignored by anyone who wants to attain a true understanding of the Catholic Faith, for it is only by understanding her doctrines that one will truly understand the Catholic Church and the

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THE Three Ages of the Interior Life is one of the greatest works ever written on the spiritual life, and it is the masterpiece of Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. (1877-1964), whom many consider the greatest theologian of the 20th century. First published in English in 1948, *The Three Ages of the Interior Life* has been out of print for many years, yet it is widely known and highly esteemed by those fortunate enough to own a set.

In this classic work Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange has given a complete and systematic explanation of ascetical and mystical theology, in the process explaining all aspects of the supernatural life of grace in the soul and showing how Sanctifying Grace, along with the Supernatural Virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity, and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost, are meant to grow and develop as a "supernatural organism" in every Christian soul. Basing his teaching squarely on the principles of St. Thomas Aquinas and St. John of the Cross, Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange also draws freely from Sacred Scripture and Tradition, as well as from the teachings of the great Saints, Doctors of the Church and other Catholic mystical writers.

Composed of 95 chapters, this two-volume work covers a myriad of topics, yet it is no mere random collection of doctrinal subjects. Rather, it is a work of unity, structure and purpose, and it is extremely valuable as a roadmap for understanding the rich but often disorganized writings of the Saints and other mystical writers.

Among the topics explained by Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange are the healing of pride and of acedia (spiritual sloth), spiritual direction, the.discovering and combating of one's predominant fault, the active and passive purifications of the senses, intellect and will, the way to draw fruit from Confession and Holy Communion, retarded souls, preparation for infused contemplation, understanding the language of mystical writers, the spiritual fruits of chastity, the inspirations of the Holy Ghost, the discerning of spirits, the degrees of contemplative prayer, the heroic degree of the various Christian virtues, the errors of Modernism, naturalism, Americanism, Jansenism and Quietism and how they deform the spiritual life, the entrances into the illuminative and unitive ways, rhe dark nights of the senses ami of the spirit anil the conduct to be observed therein, love for the Divine Will, zeal for the salvation of souls, rhe mystical espousals and the mystical marriage,

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